

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-07 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

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EPG-02 TRSE-00 STR-04 OMB-01 CEA-01 COME-00

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FM AMEMBSSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4337

INFO AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL BOMBAY

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMCONSUL MADRAS

DIA WASHDC

USLO PEKING

CINCPAC

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E. O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PINT, MARR, MPOL, IN

SUBJECT: DEFENSE MINISTRY ANNUAL REPORT (1976-77)

REF: A. 76 NEW DELHI 4927, B. NEW DELHI 9055

1. THE DEFENSE MINISTRY'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1976-77, WHICH
WAS PRESENTED TO PARLIAMENT ON JUNE 23, STRESSES THE UN-
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DIMINISHED THREAT TO INDIA SECURITY. AS IN PREVIOUS YEARS,
THE DEFENSE MINISTRY'S REPORT IS MORE NEGATIVE IN REVIEWING
INDIA'S BILATERAL RELATIONS PARTICULARLY WITH PAKISTAN, THAN
THE JUST-RELEASED MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS' ANNUAL REPORT
(REF B). THE DEFENSE MINISTRY WOULD APPEAR TO BE CONCERNED
ABOUT PROTECTING ITS CLAIM TO SUFFICIENT RESOURCES
IN THE NATIONAL BUDGET NOW BEING DEBATED IN PARLIAMENT. IN

ADDITION TO REVIEWING THE NATURE OF THE THREAT TO NATIONAL SECURITY, THE REPORT PROVIDES CONSIDERABLE INFORMATION CONCERNING THE ORGANIZATION AND FUNCTIONING OF THE MINISTRY AND MILITARY SERVICES, WHICH WILL BE COVERED BY A SEPARATE DATA REPORT.

2. PAKISTAN: WHILE "A MEASURE OF NORMALISATION OF RELATIONS WITH PAKISTAN" IS ACKNOWLEDGED TO HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN THE PAST YEAR, THE REPORT CLAIMS THAT ITS NEIGHBOR'S "CONCERTED EFFORTS TO PROCURE MILITARY HARDWARE FROM ALL POSSIBLE SOURCES WILL CAUSE A SETBACK TO THE PROCESS OF NORMALISATION AND MAY LEAD TO AN ARMS RACE IN THE SUB-CONTINENT." IN THE FIVE YEARS SINCE THE 1971 WAR, PAKISTAN IS SAID NOT ONLY TO HAVE REPLENISHED THE LOSSES SUFFERED THEN BUT TO HAVE MADE "IMPRESSIVE ADDITIONS" TO ITS STRENGTH. THE SITUATION ON THE BORDER WITH PAKISTAN IS DESCRIBED AS REMAINING PEACEFUL EXCEPT FOR A "FEW LOCAL INSTANCES OF FIRING" AND VIOLATIONS OF AIR SPACE.

3. BANGLADESH: THE BDG IS ACCUSED OF HAVING "MOUNTED A VIRULENT ANTI-INDIA CAMPAIGN THROUGH MEDIA AND THE STATEMENTS OF THEIR POLITICAL LEADERS." THE ALLEGATION THAT INDIA HAS ASSISTED LAWLESS ELEMENTS IN BANGLADESH IS REJECTED AS NOT CONTAINING "AN IOTA OF TRUTH."

4. CHINA: "IN THE NORTH, THERE HAS BEEN NO MAJOR INCREASE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IN THE OVERALL STRENGTH OF THE CHINESE ARMED FORCES IN TIBET." THE REPORT CONTINUES THAT THERE HAS NOT BEEN ANY SIGNIFICANT INCIDENT ON THE BORDER WITH CHINA, AND OVERALL "THERE HAS BEEN SOME IMPROVEMENT IN THE CLIMATE OF OUR RELATIONS."

5. INDIAN OCEAN: THE REPORT USES THE NON-ALIGNED FORMULATIONS IN STATING THAT "THE CONTINUATION OF GREAT POWER RIVALRY AND TENSION IN THE INDIAN OCEAN AND OF FOREIGN MILITARY BASES SUCH AS DIEGO GARCIA ARE MATTERS OF SERIOUS CONCERN TO INDIA..." (COMMENT: THE MEA ANNUAL REPORT DOES NOT CITE DIEGO GARCIA BY NAME.) CALLING FOR THE GREAT POWERS TO RESPECT THE INDIAN OCEAN ZONE OF PEACE DECLARATION OF THE UN, THE REPORT ARGUES THAT "THERE CAN BE NO LASTING PEACE AND SECURITY UNTIL GREAT POWER MILITARY RIVALRY AND BASES CONCEIVED IN THAT CONTEXT ARE ELIMINATED FROM THAT AREA."

6. THE FINAL PARAGRAPH OF THE SECTION DESCRIBING THE THREAT TO INDIA CONCLUDES: "DESPITE WELCOME IMPROVEMENTS IN THE POLITICAL CLIMATE IN OUR RELATIONS WITH NEIGHBOURS, OUR ANXIETY AS THE THREAT TO OUR SECURITY HAS NOT DIMINISHED.

SOURCES OF TENSION AND CONFLIT HAVE NOT YET BEEN RESOLVED AND INDIA CANNOT AFFORD TO RELAX HER DEFENCE PREPAREDNESS AND VIGILANCE."

7. THE DELHI PRESS JUNE 24 GAVE THE DEFENSE MINISTRY REPORT FRONT PAGE COVERAGE BUT WITHOUT EMBELLISHMENT. THERE HAS BEEN NO EDITORIAL COMMENT TO DATE.
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